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“Veronica”
OR
“The Holy Face”

A Religious Drama
Five Acts and Five Tableaux

By
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“Permissu Superiorum”

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FOREWORD:

As the whole scheme of redemption is based on the Passion and Death of our Saviour, it is proper that every Christian should become intimately acquainted with that stupendous sacrifice, which the Son of God offered for our salvation. The saints of all ages have made this the constant theme of their discourses, according to the example of the great apostle of the Gentiles, who said: "We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews indeed a stumbling block and unto the Gentiles a scandal; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

There can be no doubt that the stage is a most powerful medium to impress truths upon the mind. We know from history that this means has often been used most effectually to imbue Christian souls with the truths of our holy faith. Encouraged by these examples, I venture to present this little drama to the public though not without some fear and hesitation, as the theme is the most sacred. However, I have endeavored to treat the subject with the greatest respect, never allowing the sacred person of our Saviour or those most intimately associated with Him to appear on the stage except in tableaux. In the first part of the play, the betrayal, the condemnation, the sufferings and death of Christ as also His glorious resurrection, are represented; in the second, the fruits of Christ's Passion and Death.

Hoping that this play will help to diffuse a grateful remembrance of Christ crucified and a greater love of Him who died for the love of us all, I commit it to the kind indulgence of the public.





CAST OF CHARACTERS

Caiphas and Annas, High Priests.

Sirach	}	Pharisees and Members of the Sanhedrim
Nathan		
Gameliel		
Sim'on		

Abenadar, A centurion of the Roman army.

Nicodemus,	}	Wealthy Israelites and Friends of Christ.
Joseph of Arimathea.		

Pilate, Roman governor of Judea.

Fabius, A Roman nobleman.

Petronius, A Roman general.

Cassianus, Jailer of Roman prison.

Regulus, A Roman general, son of Fabius.

The Emperor.

Rebecca, Wife of Caiphas.

Miriam and Ruth, Daughters of Caiphas.

Veronica, Wife of Sirach.

Cleopha, Her daughter.

Domitilla, Wife of Fabius.

Claudia, Her daughter.

Sabina, Wife of Cassianus.

Maxima, Her daughter.

Soldiers.

Courtiers.

Virgins.

Servants.

SYNOPSIS OF DRAMA

ACT I.

Caiphas, the High Priest of Jerusalem and the Members of the Sanhedrim debate on the expediency of putting the Christ to death. Caiphas is resolved that He must die. They depart for the court of justice. Rebecca and her daughters, Ruth and Miriam, await the issue of the trial. Abenadar relates the scene of the betrayal. Caiphas and Sanhedrim return from the trial. Veronica pleads with her husband to have no part in the proceedings against the Nazarene, but in vain. Caiphas rejoices that the hour of his revenge has come.

ACT II.

The home of Veronica. She awaits her husband's return from the trial. He brings the news of Christ's condemnation. Veronica's defense of the Saviour. Nicodemus relates the sufferings of Christ. Miriam's motive of hatred for the Nazarene. The Saviour on His way to Calvary passes the home of Veronica. She goes to comfort Him. Tableau of the Impression on Veronica's veil. At sight of the miraculous veil, Sirach and Ruth profess their faith in Christ.

ACT III.

The palace of Pilate, the Roman Governor. Members of the Sanhedrim petition Pilate to guard the tomb of the Nazarene. Abenadar relates the wonders at the death of Christ. Pilate's terror. He is overcome by remorse. The palace of Caiphas. Abenadar reports the death of Christ and proclaims his faith in Him. Ruth professes her faith in Christ. She is banished from home. Miriam swears revenge against Christ and His followers. Caiphas becomes insane.

ACT IV.

Rome. The Garden of Fabius. Grief of Fabius and family over the serious illness of Claudia. Regulus recalled to the army. Death of Claudia. Veronica announced. The appeal to the gods of Rome. Veronica restores Claudia to life by means of the miraculous veil. Fabius and family converted to Christ. The threat of Petronius. Miriam, detected as a spy, leaves the service of Fabius.

ACT V.

The Catacombs. Abenadar explains to Fabius the doctrines of Christianity. The consecration of Virgins. The burial service. Soldiers led by Miriam surprise the Christians and carry them off to prison. The Mamertine prison. The conversion of Cassianus and his family through the restoration of his wife's sight. Denounced to the emperor by Miriam, they are cast into the prison. Miriam mocks the captive Christians. "Ye shall die as the Nazarene, hated and despised—then my work is accomplished.

The palace of the Emperor. The feast-day of the Emperor. The festival dance. Fabius and family proclaim themselves Christians. Regulus' defense of his father. His conversion. His death. The condemnation of Fabius. Other Christians brought to trial. The destruction of Jupiter. Rage of the Emperor. Petronius, commanded to destroy the miraculous veil is struck dead. Soldiers refuse to touch it. Miriam offers to do what Roman soldiers are afraid to do. Her conversion. Miriam's death. The Emperor condemns the Christians to be thrown to the wild beasts. The martyrs in glory.

“VERONICA” OR “THE HOLY FACE”

Prologue: Tableau—“The Betrayal of Judas.”

ACT I—SCENE I.

(Caiphas and ten or more members of the Sanhedrim in the house of Caiphas.)

Caiphas. At last we shall be enabled to put an end to the evil doings of this contemptible Nazarene. It is sad indeed that we allowed him to go free so long, endangering the peace of the nation. But soon he shall be in our power.

Sirach. Even if he were captured this night, I fear it would be too late, for all the nation is running after him as the greatest of the prophets. He deceives the people by his so-called miracles and his healing powers; by his persuasive speech and by his pretended love of the poor and the outcast. The people will demand his release.

Nathan. By what means do you expect to get him into your power? I seriously doubt that your expectations will be fulfilled, for he escaped so often, before, when we thought escape was impossible.

Caiphas. It is true, he seems to have the magical power to make himself invisible, but I trust it will not avail him in this instance. One of his own followers, whom he loved and trusted implicitly, but who loves money more than his master, offered to deliver him to us for a stipulated sum of money. We promised what he demanded, and tonight he went, accompanied by a band of soldiers, to meet him as a follower and friend in the garden where he is accustomed to pray.

Simon. But how shall we accomplish his capture?

Caiphas. The kiss of friendship is the sign by which the

soldiers are to recognize the Nazarene. They have orders to bring him hither and we shall see to it that he is condemned and crucified before the Feast. Witnesses have been summoned even now to testify that he is an imposter, that he incites the people to rebellion, in one word, that he disturbs the peace of the nation.

Gamaliel. If this man is sent by God, his work will continue, even if we have him crucified; for what are we against the God of Israel? If he is an imposter, it will die of itself; wherefore I would advise be not hasty in this matter. There is not sufficient time before the Feast to consider a question so serious.

Caiphas. Die he must and before the Feast. He has antagonized the priesthood and the elders of the people, wherefore he can be tolerated no longer. He has upbraided us, and cast reproaches on us in public and in private; he has condemned our life by word and deed; he has made us an object of contempt and ridicule before the people. He has helped others, if he is of God, let him help himself, if he can.

Gamaliel. He has indeed helped many and for that reason I again counsel you to have patience. In time we shall know whether he is of God, or whether he is to be despised as an imposter. I implore you not to desecrate the Feast by a hasty and unjust trial.

Caiphas. Thou, too, then, art a follower of this deceiver?

Gamaliel. I am not his follower, but, I plead for simple justice, which should be denied no man, not even a criminal.

(A great noise is heard in the court; the rabble shouts "Death to the Nazarene. To the cross with him.")

Caiphas. At last they are bringing him in. Let us adjourn to the court of justice. (*All leave. The wife of Caiphas, Rebecca, and her two daughters, Ruth and Miriam enter by another door.*)

Rebecca. My daughters, we shall remain here to await the issue of the trial. I have some misgivings that he may still escape as he has done before.

Miriam. No, dear mother, this time he shall not escape. (*Abenadar, the centurion, enters with soldiers.*)

Abenadar. Pardon, worthy lady, I have been commanded to place these soldiers here to guard the palace. (*Soldiers are stationed.*) Let no one pass without the sign.

(*The clamors in the court continue.*)

Rebecca. How and where was the Nazarene captured?

Abenadar. It appears he was accustomed to spend the night in some secluded spot, and not infrequently in the garden of Gethsemani. His disciples would accompany him, and rest nearby.

Rebecca. What could have been his object in following this strange custom?

Abenadar. Some say he went to commune with some Deity; others that he conversed with some powerful spirits who love the night and places of seclusion; others again say it was to surround himself with an air of mystery, which always attracts the multitude.

Miriam. Now I understand by what power he heals the sick and raises the dead. He converses with the spirits of darkness, and they communicate to him their infernal power. I heard my father say he hath a devil.

Rebecca. Abenadar, proceed with thy narrative.

Abenadar. One of his disciples, Iscariot, informed us where he would spend the night, offering to lead us

there, and by the kiss of friendship, to betray his master into our hands for a sum of money. Shame on that cowardly traitor!

Rebecca. Did the Nazarene receive him as a friend?

Abenadar. Aye, he imprinted the kiss of peace on those treacherous lips, but we heard him say distinctly, "Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" evidently discerning the object of his coming there in our company. Then the Nazarene met us boldly and asked, "Whom seek ye?" when the soldiers shouted, "Jesus of Nazareth," he said "I am he" and they fell prostrate upon the ground as though they had been smitten by some invisible power. They remained as dead until he said "Arise", I am he whom you seek, my time has come. This is the hour of the prince of darkness." Then he stretched forth his hands to let us bind him. Whatever his pretensions may be, there is indeed something unspeakably noble, something super human in his bearing. Far from fearing his enemies, he seems to be placing himself in their power, of his own free will, though he feels his superiority over them. The rabble treated him inhumanly on the way hither, yet he opened not his mouth to protest or complain, but bore it all like a hero who has a duty to perform, But hark!

(The Jews are shouting "He has blasphemed, he is guilty of death, to the cross with him.")

Ruth (On the balcony, turning to her mother) Dear mother, they have found him guilty of death. All is over with that impostor.

Miriam. (Standing before her mother.) Yes, dear mother, he will pay the penalty for the insults he has cast upon our father, and all the nation. All his threats were but boasts, for now he is powerless

and cannot escape the execution of the law.

(Pharisees enter with Caiphas.)

Ruth. Father, what has happened thee? See, thy garment is rent!

Caiphas. (Enraged.) What has happened? This impostor, being accused of sedition and many other transgressions of the law, proclaimed himself the Son of God, and avows that we shall see him coming on the clouds of heaven to judge the world. His blasphemy condemns him—he must die, and die before the Feast. In the morning we shall bring him to Pilate to have him formally condemned to die on the cross. *(To a servant)* Obed, see thou that a cross is prepared, so that there may be no delay.

(Nicodemus enters, and at the last words addresses Caiphas.)

Nicodemus. Say not so. If this man is sent by God, no power on earth can stay the progress of his teachings. Why such haste? Why desecrate the Feast?
(Judas enters unnoticed.)

Caiphas. If that man lives, all Judea will run after him, and the Romans will come to take from us the last vestige of independence. Die he shall, for it is better that one man die, than that the whole nation perish.

Judas. You are condemning the Holy One of Israel. The Nazarene did nought but good. His curse is upon me. I have betrayed him who was sent by the Most High to redeem Israel. It were better I had never been born. I have betrayed innocent blood. Woe is me.

Caiphas. What is that to us. See thou to it. *(Judas throws his money-bag at the feet of the High Priest)*
(Veronica enters addressing her husband, Sirach, one of the Pharisees.)

Veronica. My good husband, I pray thee, have nothing to do with this proceeding against the Nazarene. I have often told thee of his love of the poor and afflicted, and how he did good unto all. No man has ever convicted him of any wrong.

Sirach. Exalted high priest of the Lord, I will be present at the trial in the morning. (*Angrily departs with his wife.*)

Caiphas. Yes, let all be present at the trial before Pilate, for die he must, and die on the cross.

All. Yes, he must die on the cross.

Simon. The hours of this night will appear as years, for I long to see this imposter at last put to death

All. Let him be put to death—to the death of the cross.
(*All depart except Nicodemus, who lingers.*)

Nicodemus. O, God of Israel, permit not this awful crime. Let not this greatest one of the prophets, Thy Holy One, be put to death.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

(*Veronica's home. Veronica soliloquizing.*)

Veronica. It is now near noon, and still my husband has not returned. O God of Israel! is it possible that this Nazarene too should be slain like so many others of the prophets whom thou has sent, he, the most wonderful of them all, who seems and claims to be the realization of all the hopes of Israel? I believe and feel that he is the Messiah, and that he will save his people as he says. But if they slay him? Where is the redemption of Israel? Yet the prophets say of the Messiah that he shall be a man of sorrows, much afflicted and despised.

(*Sirach enters joyously.*)

Sirach. It is all over. The witnesses contradicted themselves and one another. Pilate saw no guilt in him, but the people clamoured for his death because, according to the law of Moses, he must die inasmuch as he proclaimed himself the Son of God. Now, my good wife, I have often told thee not to listen to this man. He teaches new doctrines; let us be content with that which Moses and the prophets have taught.

Veronica. He teaches as no man has ever taught, and proves by wondrous deeds that his words are truth. If he claims to be the Son of God, I will believe him, for no impostor can do his works. Sirach, who can raise the dead but God? The waves subside at his word, yea, the very demons obey his commands, as we ourselves have witnessed. Can such a man be an impostor?

(Ruth and Miriam enter.)

Ruth. Pilate has condemned him to death. Out on Golgatha he must die between two criminals like himself. To them he can preach sedition.

Cleopha. Ruth, thou dost astonish me. Has not the Nazarene said, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's?" Has he not taught submission to authority, and charity to all? Has he not practiced these virtues himself? How then canst thou speak of sedition, or hate this noble prophet? Verily, thou hast never heard him teach, or witnessed those wondrous deeds of which the whole nation speaks.

(Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea enter.)

Sirach. Friends, have you any further tidings of this trial?

Nicodemus. Yes, he is doomed to die. Pilate declared him innocent and wishing to save him, had him

scourged, crowned with thorns, clothed with mock-royal garments and thus presented to the people, to excite their compassion. I witnessed the scourging; they left not a sound spot on him. His flesh was so torn and furrowed that the bones were laid bare. Two slaves pressed the thorny crown upon his head with shocking brutality, so that the thorns pierced to the very bone. Yet under all this inhuman torture he maintained a divine calm and dignity, seeming to pity those who were torturing him, rather than deplore his own sufferings. No mere man could have endured it and much less could he have endured it in this manner.

Miriam. Were the people moved to pity when he was thus presented to them?

Nicodemus. Oh, No, though reduced to a most pitiable condition so that the words of the prophet could in truth be applied to him. "He appears a worm and no man." That multitude, encouraged and incited by his enemies, cried out, "To the cross with him, give us Barabbas." "Let his blood be upon us and upon our children." "Fatal day for Israel!" Finally, Pilate condemned him to be crucified on the heights beyond the city. Even now they are leading him forth, bearing his own cross, followed by an inhuman rabble.

Miriam. I rejoice in his death. Thy recital makes my soul dilate with joy. He has blighted my life as he has that of many others. Now let him die a death worthy of his works.

Nicodemus. How has he ever harmed thee who did good to all?

Miriam. Thou knowest Ariel, the beautiful, the rich young man of Japtha. He was my betrothed; Ariel spoke to the Nazarene of the reward in the life to

come and of the greatest perfection to be attained in this life. This deceiver told him that if he would be perfect, he should go and sell all he had, give it to the poor and follow him. Although Ariel did not follow these monstrous instructions, he became sad, and is now pining away. He has but a short time to live, owing to the evil influence of this man. Seest thou what cause I have to hate him? He has robbed me of that which I loved most upon earth.

(The voice of the multitude is heard crying out, "Death to the Nazarene; to the cross with him.")

Sirach. Even now they are passing by on the road to Golgatha.

Veronica. I go to meet him, to offer my sympathy.

(Takes a towel and walks toward the door.)

Sirach. Stay! The rude soldiers will not permit thy approach.

Veronica. Gladly would I brave even an army, to bring one drop of consolation to this just man in his untold sorrows. With this cloth shall I wipe the sweat from his face. I will show him that there are still true hearts in Israel. *(Departs.)*

**Tableau of Christ Leaving an Impression of His
Countenance on the Cloth Presented
by Veronica.**

ACT II.—SCENE II.

(Veronica's home. The same persons as before. Veronica enters, bearing the cloth showing the impression of Christ's countenance.)

Veronica. Now I know that my Redeemer liveth; for this Nazarene is in truth the Messiah of whom John, the great prophet, said, "Behold the lamb of

God who taketh away the sins of the world.”
Can you not see the divinity shine forth from that
sacred countenance disfigured for us?

Sirach. Yes, Veronica, upon beholding it I seem suddenly to behold in a new light all that I heard him teach, and I see the divine purpose in his wondrous works. How blind I was not to recognize the Messiah before. How blind to think the Messiah must come surrounded with earthly wealth and glory. The God of Heaven needs not the paltry treasures of this earth. He came to save his people from their sins by sorrows, not by joys; by sorrows that no mere man had ever known. Look ye all into that countenance, and you will recognize the Messiah as depicted by the prophets.

Ruth. (*Kneeling before the cloth, intently gazing upon it, kisses the cloth.*) Truly, I also see and believe. Henceforth will I follow his teachings and consecrate myself to his cause, for he is truly the Messiah.

Miriam. Ruth, art thou mad? I see nothing in that face but the same deceiver who sought to overthrow the priesthood of which thy father is the chief; who brought madness or despair to my betrothed; who would have brought ruin upon the whole nation had he been allowed to live.

Ruth. Come Miriam, thou needest rest after all these exciting events.

Miriam. Rest! Ah, I will go to Calvary to gladden my heart by the sight of his agonies. I rest in vengeance only—vengeance on him.

Joseph of Arimathea. I have long believed in him in secret, but now I will profess my belief openly and without fear. My new sepulchre shall be his place of burial. I will go to Pilate and demand his body,

that though he chose for our sake to be the most despised of men, we may honor him at least in death. Come Nicodemus, let us go to Golgatha to show him our love and sympathy whilst he suffers the agonies of that awful death. (*Nicodemus and Joseph of Arimathea depart.*)

Veronica. What a precious treasure he hath left us in return for my insignificant deed of love. Yet I wonder not, for he who has come to be the redemption of us sinful mortals must needs be divinely generous. O Sirach, how beautiful must that life in eternity be, of which he so often spoke, and which he promised to all, who, repenting of their sins, love and follow him! I will treasure this sacred gift to kindle my love and raise my hope, and that all may see how mighty and noble the Messiah is.

(Tableau of the Crucifixion)

ACT III.—SCENE I.

(*Pilate's palace. Pharisees consulting with Pilate.*)

Pilate. (*Contemptuously.*) Have you satiated your thirst for the Nazarene's blood? I had nothing to do with the deed that shook the whole earth and obscured the sun by its malice. It was you, who, in your hatred and blind revenge, murdered your prophet and king.

Simon. He died according to our law, for he proclaimed himself the Son of God. We told thee thy inscription was false, he was not our king. The earth quaked and the sun refused to shine, to show the approval of the Most High of the punishment meted out to this blasphemer. But enough of him. We wish to ask thee to guard his tomb, for he said that he would arise on the third day. Grant

us this, lest his disciples steal his body, and the last imposture be worse than the first.

Pilate. You have a guard, go guard it as you know.

(Abenadar, the centurion, enters. Pharisees depart.)

Abenadar. I have fulfilled my commission. I guarded the Nazarene 'till he was dead. I am fully convinced that he is the Son of God. All nature testified its dependence on him and mourned his death. Terrible scenes were witnessed by all when he expired.

Pilate. What scenes did you witness?

Abenadar. The sun was totally eclipsed, the earth quaked, and the dead appeared. The rock upon which the cross was erected was rent, and the Nazarene, after crying out with a loud voice, bowed his head and died. To be certain of his death before I left, I pierced his heart with this lance; water and blood flowed from the wound, and lo! some drops falling on this eye, the sight of which I had lost by a wound received in battle, healed the eye and restored my sight. At the same time an interior light penetrated my soul, by which I recognized in the Nazarene the Son of the living God. I believe in him as the Redeemer of the world, and will be his follower. Wherefore I pray thee, to appoint another as centurion.

Pilate. *(Terrified by what he hears, rises and goes about restlessly.)* I have no part in the death of this man. Yet finding no guilt in him I ought to have set him free. Woe to me. But the spirits whom I worship left me no rest till I had pronounced sentence, for he was their enemy. Can they protect me against him who is master of all nature? *Abenadar, the Pharisees whom thou sawest depart, demanded that I place a guard over the tomb of this man, for*

they said, he foretold that he would arise on the third day. Go thou and observe what transpires at the tomb and report to me.

Abenadar. How happy I am to be near the tomb, for if that man said he would arise, it shall certainly come to pass as he undoubtedly is the Son of God. (*Departs.*)

Pilate. Oh! to escape this terror! 'Tis everywhere—'tis upon Caiphas even as it is upon us all. A terror of the unknown, the invisible, the deathless! What has been done this day, we cannot comprehend—we can but feel an unfathomable mystery in the air and we grope blindly, seeing nothing, touching nothing and therefore doubting everything, but nevertheless full of undefinable terror. (*Rises and paces the stage nervously. Goes to window and looks down upon the city.*) Accursed Jews! Ye forced my hand. Ye with your devilish leaders did slay this man, not I. Ecce homo! I cried to ye. I sought to make you see as I saw. (*Walks toward table at side of stage and sees message of wife. Looks at it for a moment, then reads:* “Have thou nothing to do with that just man, for I have suffered many things, this night in a dream because of him.” Oh! had I but heeded this message of my wife, I would have been spared the bitter remorse of this awful hour. I cannot rid me of the memory of this man. Oh, Nazarene! Whoever thou art, though death is the victory.

ACT III.—SCENE II.

(*Palace of Caiphas. Caiphas, Rebecca, his wife Ruth and Miriam, his daughters, and Annas.*)

Caiphas. O, unfortunate man that I am! The God of Israel will avenge the death of his prophet and I

am the cause of his death. Who can protect me against the Mighty One of Israel? (*Goes about with hands to his head.*)

Annas. Caiphas, why dost thou fear? These disturbances of nature are but like many others that have happened from time to time as history doth record. If this man had been endowed with any power over nature, he would certainly have prevented his falling into our hands. As it was, he was weak and helpless as the vilest slave or as a sheep being slaughtered. If he had more than human power, he had every opportunity to show it; but he went to death without a word that would show even a desire to save himself. Therefore there is no cause for fear; let us rather rejoice that he is no more. The memory of him and his works will soon fade away as the flashes of light from a meteor. (*Abenadar enters.*)

Abenadar. (*Addressing Caiphas.*) Sir, I have come to report the death of the Nazarene. They say in life he did many wondrous deeds; if so, his death was a fitting conclusion of such a life. Never have I heard or seen such marvels as I have witnessed this day. Even on the cross he manifested his power over all nature, which was convulsed with grief at his death; yea, he had power over the very spirits of the departed, for they appeared to many and protested against the murder of their king.

Caiphas. Art thou too a follower of the Nazarene?

Abenadar. I am not a Jew. I am a Roman officer. My command was detailed to Calvary during the crucifixion. What I there beheld convinced me that the Nazarene is in truth the master of the heavens and the earth. Seest thou this eye? It was wounded in battle and remained without sight. When the bones

of the murderers crucified with him were broken, the Nazarene was dead, but to leave no doubt, I pierced his heart with this lance, and from the wound blood and water gushed forth; some few drops fell upon my eye, and my sight was immediately restored. An inner light at the same time illuminated my soul by which I understood that he was God as well as man, and that the sacrifice he made was for the redemption of us all. Wherefore, from hence forward I will devote my life to him who gave his own for me. I will propagate his teaching, and, if need be, shed my blood in its defense. (*Abenadar departs.*)

Ruth. That same heavenly light hath shown me also that he is in truth the Messiah promised by the prophets, the Redeemer of the world sent by God to raise up and purchase for us a life divine.

Caiphas. Ruth, thou too! No, never. Thou art mad. Ruth, unsay what thou hast said.

Ruth. Father how can I speak against my innermost conviction, or close my eyes to the truth which God has made clearer to me than the very light of day?

Caiphas. Depart from this house forever, thou ungrateful child. I will have none of my family among the followers of the Nazarene, who deservedly died an ignominious death. The Messiah indeed! The Messiah Israel expects, is one who will raise the nation to the glory and power it had in the days of David and Solomon, and free us from the yoke of the Romans. Not one that is poor as a beggar and preaches contempt of this world's goods and pleasures as he did. We want no such Messiah and no one shall teach his doctrine. If thou wilt persist in thy idle fancy or madness, Judea is no place for thee, much less this house, for we hate him all of

us, and his memory will be but a source of pain.

Miriam. Father, Ruth has fallen under the evil influence of this man through an impression of his face left on a cloth which Veronica presented to him to wipe the sweat and blood from his brow, whilst on the way to Golgatha. I saw that face. It was no more than the face of a deceiver; but Veronica and Ruth and even Sirach thought it something divine. Ruth has gone mad through the evil influence he imparted to that impression.

Ruth. I am not gone mad, but my eyes are opened to the truth, and I will follow the truth even if it cost me a painful separation from all that I love. He said, "He that is ashamed of me before men, I will also be ashamed of him before my Father who is in heaven." And he also said, "He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me". If Judea will not harbor me, the world is wide and some other land will be my home where I can worship God in truth and so gain eternal life. Even if it cost my life, I will follow the Nazarene to the end.

Rebecca. Then leave our presence, and anger us no longer by thy idle speech. We will hear no more of the Nazarene. I will not own thee longer as a child.

Ruth. Dear father and mother, I regret to give you pain, but we must obey God rather than man. I will go forth from this home of my childhood and trust in him who provides even for the birds of the air. (*Rapt for a moment she extends her arms*). Oh, I behold him! He bids me come. Farewell. (*Departs.*)

Miriam. I will follow them wheresoever they go, and denounce them as traitors to the nation. There can be nothing good in them that follow this deceiver. (*Follows Ruth.*)

Rebecca. O my children, do not leave me (*Stretches her arms towards them*) Ruth, Miriam do not leave your mother thus. O Nazarene! This is thy revenge. (*Faints and falls into the arms of Caiphas who places her on a couch.*)

Caiphas. (*Raving in despair*) Oh, how many evils are falling on me this day! My children gone; my wife stricken with deadly grief; the God of Israel filled with wrath against me! Oh, there, the Nazarene whom I murdered! He was the Son of God. No, no, he was a deceiver of the people, a false prophet. But if he were the Son of God, the true Messiah as he said? (*A cross appears*) No, no, away with him! Ah, thou who destroyest the temple and in three days dost rebuild it, come down from the cross and I will believe in thee. Ah, there, come down from the cross. Ha, ha, he helped others, he cannot help himself, ha, ha, ha. (*Falls to the ground.*)

(*Tableau of the Resurrection.*)

ACT IV.—SCENE I.

(*Garden of Fabius, a Roman nobleman.*) (*Fabius and Domitilla as also their son Regulus, conversing in the garden.*)

Fabius. Domitilla, our daughters' illness grieves me much. The physician says her death may be expected at any moment. O, if the gods would but spare her life!

(*Petronius enters with a message from the emperor. Presents it to Regulus.*)

Petronius. Pardon, kind friends, I have a message from the emperor to Regulus. (*Regulus opens and reads it.*)

Fabius. Dear son, may we hear the message with which the emperor honors you?

Regulus. Most assuredly, my dear father. It is no secret. I will read it for you.

To Regulus, Our beloved friend,

Reports have been brought to me that the enemy has attacked the army under your command, wherefore I must urge you to return immediately to your post.

The Emperor.

(Meanwhile Miriam and Petronius are conversing secretly.)

Regulus. My dear parents. I was rejoicing that I could spend a few days with you, to help you bear the grievous affliction that overwhelms us all because of Claudia's illness, but duty calls me. I know your wishes, wherefore I will not delay to make further excuses. May the gods restore health to Claudia and joy to your hearts. Farewell. *(Departs, after embracing them.)*

Domitilla. I do not like that foreign attendant we engaged for Claudia, though she appears to be very intelligent. At times she seems so absent in thought and forgetful of her charge as to make one suspect that her occupation is but a cloak to conceal some secret in her life, or a means to accomplish some end. Miriam reminds me much of that Christian maiden that was here with Veronica a few days ago. They will be here again today. I have sent for them to speak to them of Claudia's illness. Veronica told me wonderful things of Christ, their Messiah, and of a cloth she possesses on which the face of Christ was miraculously impressed. Perhaps they can help our daughter.

Fabius. They are strange people, these Christians. What little I have heard of this new religion, is beyond the comprehension of mere mortals. They say man is fallen from a primitive, higher state, by rebelling against a deity, and this God became man and died amidst great torments to redeem the race and lift it up again into favor, making himself the victim for their crime. A noble God and divinely generous he must be, if this be true.

(A servant announces Veronica and Ruth.)

Fabius. Bring them into the garden. *(Then turning to his wife.)* Domitilla, thy hopeful feeling is contagious. Their arrival brings joy to my heart, and a feeling that God will help our child. *(Veronica and Ruth enter.)*

Fabius. Welcome to our home.

Domitilla. We have sent for you because Claudia, our daughter, is very ill. Some time ago, you told me of the great deeds of your Messiah and of the wonderful cloth you possess. A feeling of hope arose in our hearts that your God would help our child. *(Petronius enters and while passing Miriam, who is observing the Christians from the porch, whispers to her then joins the company.)*

Veronica. It seems somewhat strange to me that your gods, *(Points to some idols in the garden)* of whom you are devout worshipers, do not aid you in this great affliction.

Domitilla. We are indeed worshipers of the gods of Rome, but who has ever heard that they helped any mortal in time of sorrow and affliction? Just before you entered, we were making reflections on what we heard of your God, of his love and generosity in redeeming our race, of his healing the sick and the blind, and we thought it beyond the

comprehension of man that a God should so love him. We learn of our gods that they are cruel and selfish. No one would expect of anyone of them that he would forgive an enemy, much less that he would become the victim for that enemy's crime.

Veronica. The one true God who created all things that are, is infinite in power, for he is the first cause of all things that are, whereas he himself had, and could have, no beginning. He loves man as the masterpiece of his visible creation, and the image and likeness of himself. When man prays to him with faith and confidence, he grants the prayer, if in his infinite wisdom he judges the gift beneficial to his creature. (*A slave announces the death of Claudia to Fabius. Grief stricken, he announces the sad news to his wife.*)

Fabius. Domitilla, our child is dead. We have hoped in vain. (*Embraces Domitilla.*)

Domitilla. The light of our life is extinguished. Our joy has departed. Oh, my poor child.

Veronica. Do not despair, my friends. The God of Christians can raise her from the dead as easily as he can restore her health. Pray to your gods, and see if any or all of them can help you; if they fail, we will ask the one God the Christians worship to grant the favor that you may see his power and believe in him.

Fabius. Let Claudia be brought here. (*Claudia is brought by servants, on a bed.*)

Fabius. (*Prays to the gods*) O ye gods of Rome whom we worship, hear this our prayer, restore our child to life and manifest your power that we may continue to worship. (*Offers incense*) (*A pause*)

Veronica. You pray and plead in vain for there is but

one true God and he alone is master of life and death. Have faith and join us in our petition to him, and you will see that he is truly powerful and full of mercy. (*Kneels down with Ruth and prays silently, then aloud.*) O God of goodness, see thy children at thy feet, trusting in thy great power and fatherly love. For his sake who gave himself for us, hear our prayer and restore life to this, thy creature, that all may glorify thy Holy Name. (*Takes the cloth and approaches Claudia.*) Behold the face of him who is the Son of the true God and who came upon earth from the heights of heaven to redeem us by sorrows and death. Believe in him and he will console you as he has consoled the widow of Naim and many others, (*Touches Claudia with the cloth. Claudia gradually arises as out of a dream, then takes hold of cloth and says:*)

Claudia. O that same divine face that I beheld in a vision. The face of Jesus of Nazareth which looked upon me so lovingly. (*Her mother, rejoicing, embraces her, Claudia then embraces her father.*)

Fabius. Veronica, what thou sayest is true, there is but one God. Our gods are false deities who deceive us poor mortals. I abjure the gods of Rome, and henceforth I shall believe in the one true God who died for us.

Petronius. Take heed, Fabius, treason to the gods of Rome is treason to the emperor. His friendship for thee will not save thee. He will not pardon this act. (*Departs speaking to Miriam as he passes out.*)

Domitilla. I fear he will report this whole affair to the emperor. See him speaking to Miriam. I suspect there is some secret between them. (*Sends a servant for Miriam. Ruth much surprised at seeing*

her.) Miriam, what friendship is there between thee and Petronius? I have seen thee in secret conversation with him when he visits of late.

Miriam. No friendship. He is a tool I use to accomplish the one purpose of my life. I have sworn hatred to Christ and his followers. He has blighted my life and brought ruin to our family. My father is stricken with madness or despair, my mother is dead from grief and I am a homeless wanderer. I have followed these Christians from Jerusalem. I have shadowed them wherever they went, but the hour of vengeance is come. That Christian (*Points to Ruth*) is my sister. She can tell thee more. Farewell, till I meet you again. (*Departs.*)

Domitilla. Ruth, is Miriam truly your sister?

Ruth. Yes, she is my unfortunate sister. My father was high-priest among the Jews, and contributed much to the condemnation of Christ to death. I myself hated the Nazarene until, enlightened by grace, I recognized in him the Son of the living God and the long expected Messiah. I hope some day grace will be vouchsafed to my sister. But let us not forget to give thanks for the great favors received today. (*All kneel to offer a prayer of silent thanksgiving.*)

Fabius. My friends, my house is at your service whenever the Christians wish to meet. I will erect an altar to the true God in place of the idols, and hope to learn more of Christ and his teaching.

Veronica. As there are enemies about us who are acting as spies, we shall meet in the catacombs on the Ap-pian Way. There our venerable priest, Abenadar, will teach you all that is necessary. Farewell. (*Christians depart.*)

Fabius. Now I understand that undefinable longing of

my heart for something higher than the worship of these socalled gods of Rome could promise us. There is one true God by whose omnipotent will we exist and to whom we shall return. A God of infinite love and generosity.

Domitilla and Claudia. Yes, him alone we will worship and follow in the future. For him we will live and die. May his name be praised.

Florinus and Corvinus and Slaves. We also desire to become worshipers of the God of Christians.

Fabius. Then we shall all serve our common Father who is in heaven. From this day you are no longer slaves, but free children of him whom we all have the privilege of calling Father. Tomorrow we shall all meet in the catacombs. (*Fabius loosens the chains of the slaves and embraces them.*)

ACT V.—SCENE I.

(*The catacombs.*) (*Many Christians, Abenadar, Fabius and family as also twelve virgins in white. An altar with cross and candles.*)

Abenadar. Fabius, welcome into our midst. I have heard of the great favor bestowed on thy daughter, and that you all wish to serve the one true God.

Fabius. We are come to learn more about Christ and his teaching. Who was this Nazarene whom you call Messiah?

Abenadar. He himself testified that he is the Son of the living God, Creator of all things, and that he came to redeem the human race which had provoked the anger of the Creator by rebelling against him. He proved the truth of his words by wonderful works such as curing the incurably blind and sick and by raising the dead to life, but more convincingly still by arising from the grave himself on the third day

and remaining with his disciples in visible form for forty days, during which time he was seen and heard by many. On the fortieth day, he, by his own power, ascended to heaven into glory, to prepare a place of happiness beyond the comprehension of man for all who will follow his teaching.

Fabius. Has his teaching been accepted by many?

Abenadar. Yes, by many of all ranks from Jerusalem to Rome.

Fabius. And what are the results?

Abenadar. He taught that we are all children of the same merciful Father and thousands are now serving him in love and obeying his commands to gain that eternal home of joy that he promised them. He said: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." "Blessed are the clean of heart, for they shall see God." The result is, that the rich are distributing generously of their wealth to the poor. The unclean are living pure lives and many are renouncing all bodily pleasures and are willing to sacrifice all, even life itself, for his sake. All have learned from his example to love one another as brethren. The master loves the slave, the rich love the poor. The more favored love and reclaim the outcast for the sake of him who died for us all. (*Singing is heard.*)

Fabius. What may this beautiful singing signify?

Abenadar. Ah, Fabius, now you shall see for yourself the attractive power of Christ's love. (*Abenadar points to the left. Virgins enter singing "Whence to Me the Bliss" Notre Dame Sisters' Hymn book, p. 174.*)

Fabius. Pray who are these maidens and why are they clad in white?

Abenadar. Among these are some of the noblest maidens of the empire who, for the love of Christ have left father and mother, riches, luxury and all this world could promise, to consecrate their lives to him. (*Addressing the virgins*) My dear children, you have left all that was dear to you in this world to espouse Christ. You have forsaken earthly joys for those that are eternal. Your love for him who was crucified for you has led you to make this sacrifice. May your reward be exceedingly great. (*A guard comes to announce to Abenadar that the Christians are being sought by the soldiers.*)

Abenadar. Persecution is upon us, my brethren! The soldiers are seeking us. The life of the disciples must be like unto the life of the Master, who said to the doubting disciples going to Emmaus on the day after his glorious resurrection: "O foolish and slow of heart to believe in all the prophets have spoken. Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and so enter into his glory?" And after the Last Supper, the night before he died. "They will put you out of the synagogues; yea the hour cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doth a service to God. And these things will they do to you because they have not known the Father nor me." The words of the Master have been verified, as indeed they must be, for he was divine. But my brethren, let us not fear for the little flock of Christ for he said: "Behold, I am with you to the consummation of the world." When the last day shall come, we shall see him coming in the clouds of heaven with great power and majesty to judge and to triumph over his enemies, and we shall triumph with him and share in his glory forever. Now, as there is danger, let all those who desire to be numbered among the vir-

gins, come forward. (*A number of Christian maidens approach. Ruth, Claudia, Cleopha, etc.*)

Abenadar. Do you believe in Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world?

The Virgins. We do.

Abenadar. Do you consecrate your life wholly and exclusively to him?

The Virgins. We do.

Abenadar. Then I receive you into the number of his spouses in his name. May he be your reward and your joy forever. (*All sing "Jesu corona virginum."*)

Abenadar. A sad duty remains to be fulfilled, or I should rather say a joyful duty. One of your number having departed from this life for a better one, we shall now give her blessed remains Christian burial. They are in the crypt nearby. (*All follow the priest and return in procession, four virgins carrying the bier and all singing the "Miseremini mei" or the "Libera me Domine" or "Magnet of Souls, O Holy Face" Notre Dame Hymn book p. 177. When near the end, soldiers enter, led by Miriam, slay some, and take others prisoners. Fabius and family escape.*)

ACT V.—SCENE II.

The Prison. (*Some Christians are there, others are being brought in by soldiers.*)

Cassianus. This is where your worship of the Nazarene brings you;—to prison, torture and death; whilst worship of the gods is rewarded with honor, liberty and life. Ye are fools to give up all for one who could not help himself, but died on an infamous gibbet. (*Miriam appears at the bars and gazes with joy at the prisoners.*)

Abenadar. Thou art in error Cassianus. The Nazarene

could and did help himself more than once when his enemies wished to stone him, but when his hour was come, he voluntarily went to death to give us life eternal, and after three days, he, of his own power arose from the dead in glory, and has promised to raise up all who believe in him. That he has the power, he showed by raising the dead and healing the sick.

Cassianus. If he has that power let him cure my wife who has been hopelessly blind these fifteen years, And I too will believe in him.

Veronica. Seest thou this cloth? I have seen the sick and blind instantly cured by the mere touch of it. Have faith and thou shalt see that Christ has the power to heal.

Cassianus. (*To a soldier*) Go tell Maxima to bring her mother here. I wish to speak to her. (*Maxima brings her mother*)

Cassianus. Sabina, thou art blind these many years. These Christians tell me their God can restore your sight, and give us an eternal life if we believe in him.

Abenadar. Have faith and pray with us to Christ, the Son of the living God. (*All kneel down to pray.*)

Abenadar. O God of goodness, look down with mercy upon thy children, and for the sake of him who died for us, hear our prayer and restore the sight of this, thy afflicted creature, that thy name may be known and glorified on earth as it is in heaven. (*Veronica touches her with the holy veil and her sight is restored. All manifest great astonishment*)

Sabina. Oh, my eyes perceive the light again after so many ears of utter darkness. O thou God of the Christians who hast restored my sight, I willingly believe in thee, that from thy great power and gen-

erosity I may also obtain that life beyond the grave which thou hast promised. (*Turning to her husband and daughter*) And you, my husband and daughter, will you also believe in him who this day has manifested to us his power and mercy?

Cassianus. Yes, henceforth we also believe in him and are willing to give up all to follow him.

Miriam. This will cost you dearly, for as I have not rested till I saw these hated Christians in prison, so I will also have you laid in chains as traitors to the gods and to the emperor. How I shall rejoice when every hated Nazarene shall be exterminated. (*Departs.*)

Abenadar. Let us give thanks to God for the great mercy shown us this day. (*All kneel*) O God of infinite power and mercy, we thank thee that through thy divine Son, our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, thou hast heard our prayer and restored sight to this thy creature, and given the light of truth to these our brethren. Do thou perfect in their hearts what thou hast begun. (*After a prayer, Cassianus, Sabina and Maxima depart*)

Cassianus. Farewell for the present. My duty calls me elsewhere. If I can do aught for your relief it will afford me pleasure. (*The wounded Christians cry for water.*)

Abenadar. Water is forbidden us, but let us turn to him who gave water to the Israelites in the desert, he will not turn a deaf ear to our prayer. (*All pray silently after Veronica touches the rock with the cloth; a cross appears, and water gushes from the rock. Some is brought to the wounded.*)

Abenadar. He whose love for us was so great that he delivered up his divine Son for our redemption, has not forsaken us. If he allows us to suffer, it

is only to increase our glory in the life to come. Praised be his Holy Name. (*All say:*) Praised be his Holy Name, forever. (*Cassianus, Sabina and Maxima are brought in, chained, by Petronius and soldiers.*)

Petronius. The emperor offers pardon for all here, if you will renounce the Nazarene and sacrifice to the gods.

Abenadar. We believe in one true God and in Christ his Son, and him alone we worship.

Petronius. The emperor offers you not only freedom, but wealth and honor, if you renounce this Nazarene.

Abenadar. We have given our answer. Lose not thy time, Petronius. We all despise the perishable treasures of this earth, that we may gain those that are eternal.

Petronius. Then you shall die, one and all of you. (*Departs.*)

Miriam. (*At the barred entrance*) Yes, die you shall and by the wild beasts or worse, as the Nazarene died, hated and despised. Then my work is accomplished. (*Departs*) (*Prisoners sing, "Sanctus."*)

ACT V.—SCENE III.

(*The emperor's court. Courtiers assembled for his feast. The emperor enters and is saluted. Little girls and boys enter, carrying flowers, salute the emperor and stand aside. A number of dancing girls enter, performing a dance. When this is finished a courtier addresses the emperor.*)

Courtier. Noble emperor, we are assembled to offer thee our felicitations on this feast on which we commemorate thy ascending the throne of the mightiest em-

pire on earth. May the gods preserve thee long in power. (*All say:*) Hail the emperor, hail Jupiter, hail the gods of Rome. (*A servant announces Petronius who enters and salutes.*)

Petronius. Mighty emperor, I have fulfilled thy command. Fabius, his wife and daughter are prisoners.

The emperor. Bring them hither this instant. They shall sacrifice to the gods with the whole court or die. Hail Jupiter.

The Courtiers. Hail Jupiter and the gods of Rome. Death to the Christians. (*Fabius, his wife and daughters are brought in, chained.*)

The emperor.··(*kindly*) Fabius, I have always esteemed and honored thee as one of Rome's first and most estimable citizens. It pains me to see thee in chains. Put aside this folly and you are free again to enjoy life and wealth.

Fabius. Mighty emperor, thou sayest it pains thee to see me in chains, deprived of liberty. It is because thou and all who believe in the senseless and powerless gods of Rome, are blind, as I too was until, enlightened by a ray of divine light, I recognized the one true God, the Creator and Ruler of the universe, and his Son, the Redeemer who died to save us all. I rejoice to bear these chains for the love of him who descended from the heights of heaven to suffer for me. Through him I hope for a joy and glory far beyond any this world can give.

The emperor. Cease this idle speech, Fabius, sacrifice to the gods and I will give thee wealth greater than thou hast ever possessed.

Fabius. The wealth thou speakest of is perishable rubbish. Christ promises and will give me wealth that is eternal, that no thief can steal nor rust corrode.

(*A servant announces Regulus. He enters and salutes.*)

The emperor. Regulus, what news bringest thou of the army?

Regulus. The Roman army is victorious. The enemy has fallen back, and we were about to pursue them when I received thy message to hurry hither.

The emperor. I have called thee that thou mayest persuade thy father and mother to sacrifice to the gods. They have joined that infamous sect of Christians and their example will draw many others into the same pernicious folly. I have spoken to them in vain. There they are, prisoners. (*Regulus astonished, greets them affectionately, then turning to the emperor, in rage.*)

Regulus. Are these chains the reward of my father's long service to the empire?

The emperor. They are a punishment for treason to the empire.

Regulus. Take off those chains or bind me also. If my father believes in the God of the Christians, I also will believe in him. I have learned to know these Christians. If you had seen them fighting the enemies of Rome you would not speak of treason. They were to be seen foremost wherever the battle was fiercest, and seemed anxious to lay down their lives for their country.

The emperor. Then thou too art a Christian?

Regulus. (*Throws down his sword*) From this hour I will worship no other God but the God of the Christians.

The Courtiers. Death to Regulus.

The emperor. Soldiers, despatch him. (*Soldiers pierce him with lances.*)

The emperor. Fabius and his family shall be beheaded by the Appian Way. (*Soldiers lead them out*)

Petronius. Mighty emperor, there are other Christians in prison.

The emperor. Let them be brought hither. (*Petronius departs*) These Christians are enemies of the empire. They dare to revile our gods and worship Christ in their stead. For his sake they renounce all this world can offer them, to gain, as they believe, a life beyond the grave which he promised them. Such folly the world has never seen. This foreign sect must be destroyed lest the empire perish. (*The Christians are led in by Petronius.*)

The emperor. I have already offered you freedom; sacrifice to the gods and you shall go free.

Abenadar. We worship only the one true God. Thy idols are demons, who are powerless before the God of the Christians as thou shalt see. Veronica, approach that idol with the sacred cloth. (*Veronica does as commanded, the idol falls.*)

Abenadar. Dost thou see what power thy idols possess? Even the image of the Nazarene has power to destroy them.

The emperor. Petronius, take that cloth and throw it in the fire. (*Petronius attempts to take it from Veronica and falls dead.*)

The emperor. Soldiers, take that cloth from her. (*No one dares.*)

Miriam. O ye cowards, I will do what Roman soldiers will not dare. (*Approaches and is suddenly arrested by an ecstatic vision of Christ. She falls on her knees and with head erect, gazes at the vision, her arms outstretched toward it. After a pause, she rises, but is blind and calls for Ruth, her sister, who embraces her.*)

Miriam. O Ruth, I have seen the Christ, so beautiful, so benign. I am forgiven. He is truly the Son of God. How blind I was to hate him who is all goodness and beauty divine. Can you forgive me Ruth, for all I have done?

Ruth. Christ prayed on the cross for his executioners, and commanded his followers to love those who hate and persecute them, if they would share in his glory. Miriam, gladly do I and we all forgive thee, and will give thanks for the heavenly light thou hast received.

The emperor. No more of this folly. Miriam, sacrifice to the gods or die.

Miriam. Gladly would I give a thousand lives to behold him again as I saw him but a moment ago. Oh, too late have I known him! Never shall I worship another. I have lost my bodily sight, but I care not to look upon this earth again. Now I know that my Redeemer liveth and will take me to that eternal abode of light and glory of which he so often spoke whilst dwelling among men.

The emperor. (enraged) Soldiers, let her die this instant. (*Soldiers pierce her with lances.*)

The Christians. Praise be to Christ, the Son of God.

The emperor. Away with them! Tomorrow they shall be thrown to the wild beasts.

TABLEAU OF THE MARTYRS IN GLORY.

THE TABLEAUX.

I Tableau—"Betrayal of Judas."—

This can be staged in one or three representations. One tableau: Christ seized and bound by the soldiers. Judas in a conspicuous position near the soldiers.

Three tableaux: The first representing the act of betrayal, corresponding to the words of Holy Writ, "Judas, dost thou betray the Son of Man with a kiss?"

The second: Christ standing on one side, the soldiers lying as dead before him, according to the text Jesus said to them: "Whom seek ye?" They answered him, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus saith to them: "I am he." As soon therefore as he said to them, "I am he," they went backward and fell to the ground.

The third: Jesus stretching forth his hands, the soldiers binding him according to the text, "Then the band and the tribune, and the servants of the Jews took Jesus and bound him."

II Tableau—"Veronica Presents the Cloth to Jesus"—

This represents the fourth Station of the Way of the Cross. Christ is represented bearing his cross, preceded and followed by soldiers. Veronica standing before the Saviour with the cloth raised to his face. When the curtain rises, Veronica turns toward the audience so that all can see the impression of the Holy Face. This cloth can also be illuminated by electric light.

III Tableau—"The Crucifixion."—

This can also be staged in one or three representations:

One tableau: Christ crucified. The Blessed Mother St. John, Mary Magdalen, beneath the cross. Also some of the holy women. Soldiers on guard. The centurion, spear in hand, gazing on the dying Saviour.

Three tableaux: 1—Christ on the cross. Beneath, soldiers casting lots for his garments, according to the text: “After they had crucified him, they divided his garments, casting lots.”

2—Christ on the cross. His Blessed Mother, St. John, Mary Magdalen beneath the cross. Soldiers around The centurion with spear, gazing upon Christ. A soldier with a sponge on lance, raises it to the lips of Jesus.

3—Christ on the cross. The rest as in group No. 2. The centurion holding lance with left, raising his right hand as if professing his faith in the divinity of Christ according to the text: “And Jesus having cried out with a loud voice, gave up the ghost, and the centurion who stood over against Him, seeing that crying out in this manner He had given up the ghost, said: ‘Indeed, this man was the Son of God.’ ”

IV. Tableau—“The Resurrection.”—

In one or three representations.

One tableau: Christ standing at the open sepulchre, or over it, a strong light illuminating the figure of Christ. Two angels may be represented on or near the tomb. Soldiers lying around as dead.

Three tableaux: 1—The sepulchre open. Christ being laid in the tomb by Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathea and St. John. The Blessed Mother, Mary Magdalen and the holy women standing near the tomb, according to the text: “A certain rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus and laid it in his own new monument which he had hewn out of a rock.”

2—Christ standing at the open sepulchre, or over it, an angel standing above, the guard lying about as dead, according to the text: “For an angel descended from heaven rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. And

his countenance was as lightning and his raiments as snow. And for fear of him the guards were struck with terror and became as dead men."

3—The open sepulchre. Christ standing before it. Mary Magdalen standing at some distance, seeking him, according to the text: "But Mary stood at the sepulchre without weeping. Jesus said to her: 'Mary.' She, turning, saith to him: 'Rabboni' which is to say Master." V. Tableau—"Martyrs in Glory."—

Christ in glory on the summit of an elevation. A few angels around him, holding crown. Mary, His Blessed Mother, and the martyrs ranged round about, they sing, "Regina Coeli" or some appropriate hymn.

“Veronica”
OR
“The Holy Face”

A Religious Drama
“Five Acts and Five Tableaux”

By

REV. F. BERNARDINE, C. P.

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